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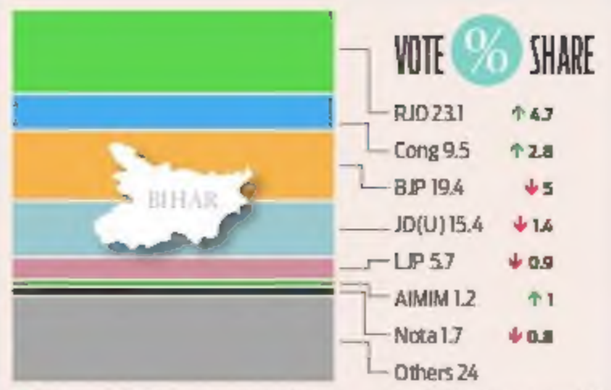

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Sisters and daughters of Bihar have voted this time in record numbers to show how big their role is in self-sufficient Bihar. We are satisfied that NDA got an opportunity to give new confidence to the mother power of Bihar in the past years. This confidence will give us strength in advancing Bihar

Narendra Modi, Prime Minister

If Nitish Kumar becomes Bihar chief minister, despite winning less number of seats (as compared to the BJP), he should thank the Shiv Sena for it

Sanjay Raut, Shiv Sena MP

Our strike rate in Bihar is 80% and if we had been given more seats, we would have contributed more to the MGB tally

Sitaram Yechury, CPM leader

A sinister campaign was run against Nitish Kumar as part of a conspiracy. Our own also harmed us along with the outsiders

KC Tyagi, JD(U) spokesperson

I would be able to answer (on whether to extend support to Mahagathbandhan) once the final results are out. Why should I speculate now?

Asaduddin Owaisi, AIMIM chief

CHENNAI • MADURAI • VIJAYAWADA • BENGALURU • KOCHI • HYDERABAD • VISAKHAPATNAM • COIMBATORE • KOZHIKODE • THIRUVANANTHAPURAM • BELAGAVI • BHUBANESWAR • SHIVAMOGGA • MANGALURU • TIRUPATI • TIRUCHY • TIRUNELVELI • SAMBALPUR • HUBBALLI • DHARMAPURI • KOTTAYAM • KANNUR • VILLUPURAM • KOLLAM • WARANGAL • TADEPALLIGUDEM • NAGAPATTINAM • THRISSUR • KALABURAGI

BJP does better than Nitish's JD(U); focus now on naming the new CM

RJD has highest vote share, is single largest party, but alliance flounders

Oppn momentum falters as Cong fails to match even its score in 2015

Owaisi eats into Oppn's Muslim vote share in Seemanchal, gets 5 seats

NDA ASCENDANT IN SEESAW

WINS/LEADS

125 NATIONAL DEMOCRATIC ALLIANCE

TOTAL SEATS 243 | HALF-WAY MARK 122

BIHAR MAHAGATH BANDHAN **110**

OTHER PARTIES **8**

- BJP: 74 • JDU: 43 • VIP: 4 • HAM: 4
- CPM: 2 • CPI: 2 • CPIML: 12 • Cong: 19 • RJD: 75
- AIMIM: 5 • BSP: 1 • IND: 1 • LJP: 1

BJP sweeps bypolls in MP, UP, Gujarat; wrests Dubbaka seat from TRS

MANISH ANAND @New Delhi

IF the bypoll verdict on Tuesday is any indicator, Prime Minister Narendra Modi continues to be popular, as the BJP bagged or was leading in as many as 40 of 59 Assembly seats across 11 states.

The biggest gainers were Madhya Pradesh Chief Minister Shivraj Singh Chouhan and his Manipur counterpart N Biren Singh, as they were assured of stability on the back of the BJP's sweeping victories in both the states.

Barring Haryana and Telangana, ruling dispensations managed to control the bypoll narrative elsewhere. Uttar Pradesh Chief Minister Yogi Adityanath further consolidated his hold, winning six of the seven Assembly by-election seats at stake. Chief ministers B S Yediyurappa (Karnataka), Naveen Patnaik (Odisha) and Hemant Soren's alliance (Jharkhand) bagged two seats each in their respective states. In Gujarat, the BJP government led by Vijay Rupani won all eight Assembly bypoll seats.

The big surprise came from Telangana as the BJP bagged the Dubbaka Assembly seat with a slender margin. Its nominee M Raghunandan Rao trounced TRS's Solipeta Sujatha by 1,118 votes. By wresting the seat, the party got bragging rights for taking its Mission South agenda forward.

The BJP's performance came despite its national leadership staying away from the campaigns, focus as it did on the Bihar Assembly polls instead. The party's state leaders demonstrated their dominance over the Congress in Madhya Pradesh and Gujarat, while denying opportunity to the Samajwadi Party in Uttar Pradesh to make a comeback.

Defector Jyotiraditya Scindia delivered on his promise as the BJP shrugged off a spirited Kamal Nath-led Congress campaign to win 19 of the total 27 Assembly seats. In Madhya Pradesh, Gujarat and Manipur, the BJP's fortunes rode on imports from the Congress in recent times.

As for the big picture, BJP leaders sought to read in the outcome a vote of confidence of the people in the leadership of the Prime Minister amid the Covid-19 pandemic.

INSIDE TEJASHWI'S SOCIAL ENGINEERING FAILS | P9 SCINDIA PROVES HIS CLOUT | P10

BYPOLL OUTCOME

Wins + leads in 59 seats across 11 states

- MADHYA PRADESH (28): BJP 19 | Cong 9
- GUJARAT (8): BJP 8
- UTTAR PRADESH (7): BJP 6 | SP 1
- MANIPUR-5: BJP 4 | Independent 1
- KARNATAKA (2): BJP 2
- JHARKHAND (2): Cong 1 | JMM 1
- ODISHA (2): BJD 2
- CHHATTISGARH (1): Cong 1
- NAGALAND (2): NDPP 1 | Independent 1
- TELANGANA (1): BJP 1
- HARYANA (1): Cong 1

RAJESH THAKUR & MANISH ANAND

@Patna/New Delhi

IF ever there was a cliffhanger of an election, with the pendulum swinging wildly by the hour, this was it. Till late evening, the day belonged to the alliance led by the Bharatiya Janata Party-Janata Dal (United), prompting the BJP to prepare for a grand victory celebration at the central party office in the heart of Delhi.

But the ladoos, firecrackers and dhols had to be put on hold as the Rashtriya Janata Dal-led mahagathbandhan closed in, turning the Bihar election 2020 into an edge of the seat thriller. Till midnight the ruling alliance was still marginally ahead, with leads/wins in 125 out of the 243 seats while the mahagathbandhan had 110.

But the results/trends also exposed the fault lines between the BJP and the JD (U). This was because the JD (U) was the biggest loser, relegated to a distant third at 43 seats, down nearly 30 from its 2015 tally. For this, it openly blamed Chirag Paswan's Lok Janshakti Party.

While the LJP just won a single seat, it ate up 5.7% of the vote share, cutting into the JD(U)'s base. More significantly, Chirag had openly worked against chief minister Nitish Kumar during the campaign while praising Prime Minister Narendra Modi.

With such a close race not witnessed in a long time and throwing up many possibilities, BJP leaders Sushil Modi, Bhupendra Yadav, Nityanand Rai and Sanjay Jaiswal rushed to Nitish's residence, remaining closeted till late at night and reassuring the chief minister that he was their leader. Union Home Minister Amit Shah also called Nitish.

But whatever be Nitish's grudge against Chirag, the election results only underlined his waning appeal. The mass mood was that he had become arrogant in the last five years, ruling the state through an unpopular and inaccessible bureaucracy. So, even if he becomes the first Bihar CM to rule for a fourth straight term, his position is bound to be much weaker.

In 27 seats, the margins were so thin that the Rashtriya Janata Dal smelt a rat. Party leader Tejashwi Yadav filed a written complaint with the Election Commission in Patna, complaining of being robbed of at least seven seats. But addressing the media past 10 pm, EC officials in New Delhi denied the charge.

The election result was also a story of what might have been for the young Tejashwi. Throughout the campaign, he drew large crowds and created a huge hype around the unemployment problem in the state. But that didn't translate into votes.

The uniform view for this failure was that Tejashwi was unable to shake off the widespread feeling among the people that if the RJD came to power, it would mean the return of the jungle raj. This fear of a return to lawlessness was repeatedly stressed by Modi and Nitish at rallies and on the face of it, jungle raj trumped unemployment.

"The NDA campaign on the return of the jungle raj created a kind of fear psychosis among the voters," said R K Verma, a political analyst.

The numbers also signalled a deeper churning in state politics, with sub-regional factors playing out. While the NDA did exceedingly well in the Seemanchal, Mithila, Champaran and Ang regions, the mahagathbandhan performed better in the Bhojpur, Magadh and central parts of Bihar.

The election also saw the emergence of Asaduddin Owaisi's All-India Majlis-e-Ittehadul Muslimeen as a force in some Muslim-dominated areas, harming the RJD. The AIMIM benefited from its alliance with Mandalite parties such as the Rashtriya Lok Samta Party and helped itself by winning five seats, up from one it held in the outgoing assembly.

BJP activists exult as the NDA does well in the Bihar Assembly polls, in Patna on Tuesday | PTI

Firefighters battle the raging inferno at a chemical godown in New Guddadahalli, Bengaluru, on Tuesday. The fire raged on for eight hours before it was put out | ASHISHKRISHNA HP

Massive blaze at chemical godown causes ₹3 cr damage

EXPRESS NEWS SERVICE @Bengaluru

SPARKS emanating from static charge while transferring chemicals from one barrel to another through a pipe caused a huge fire at a godown at Kuvempu Nagar in New Guddadahalli around 11 am on Tuesday. The blaze raged for a little over eight hours, causing damage to the tune of about ₹3 crore. Three firemen were injured and seven vehicles parked in the compound were gutted, even as four workers miraculously managed to escape just as the fire broke out.

The blaze was so intense and spreading very rapidly that the fire services and local authorities evacuated residents living in a radius of about 200 metres, moving out all LPG cylinders. The firemen were forced to get onto the terraces of adjacent buildings to aim the water and foam hoses at the fire in an attempt to douse it.

The property belonged to Rekha Chemical Corporation Pvt Ltd, which has its factory in Bommasandra Industrial Area.

Police said solvents used to produce sanitisers, thinners and other chemicals were stored in the godown. Around 11 am on Tuesday, a worker, identified as Bijukumar, was unloading a chemical from a barrel to another through a pipe, when sparks caused a massive fire. Four workers, including Bijukumar, managed to escape to safety.

Local residents alerted the Fire & Emergency Services Department at 11.18 am and soon, fire tenders rushed to the spot. Initially, there was a setback as fire tenders could not reach sooner due to the narrow lanes surrounding the residential area. As many as 22 fire tenders finally managed to get there and douse the fire in an operation lasting more than eight hours.

"As the godown was filled with chemical barrels, explosions kept occurring, emitting huge flames and heavy smoke, which were visible from kilometres away. Two foam tankers, specialised in tackling chemical fires, were also pressed into service," an official said. P5

With 3 more seats, saffron party now largest in Council

BANSY KALAPPA @Bengaluru

THE BJP has won three of the four Legislative Council seats, for which polls were held recently. The party was trailing in one seat after two rounds of counting.

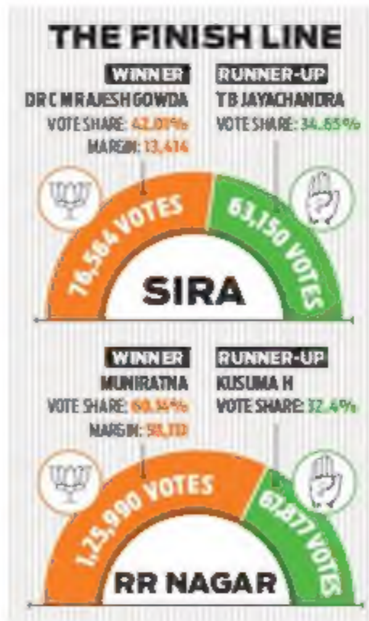
With this, the BJP emerges as the single-largest party in the 75-member Upper House with 31 seats as against the Congress with 29 seats. If the party manages to win the fourth seat too, and with the support of an Independent, its strength will rise to 33, while it needs 38 seats to get full majority in the House. The BJP may also stake claim for chairmanship in the next session and unseat present Chairman Prathapchandra Shetty of the Congress.

Gaining the upper hand in the Council will be important for the BJP as it had to face the embarrassment of not being able to push through crucial Bills on land and APMC reforms, among others. P4

SRISHTI
INSTITUTE NOW A PART OF MAHE

The Srishti Institute of Art Design and Technology is now a constituent unit of Manipal Academy of Higher Education (MAHE), and will be shifted to the latter's upcoming Yelahanka campus next year. With the merger process completed, all the programmes of the (now called) Srishti Manipal Institute of Art, Design And Technology have been approved by the academic body of MAHE, Lt Gen (Dr) M D Venkatesh, the V-C of MAHE Manipal, told reporters on the sidelines of an event. P5

BJP scripts history in Sira bypoll, wins big in Rajarajeshwari Nagar



ANUSHA RAVI @Bengaluru

THE Bharatiya Janata Party's juggernaut, which has been hoisting its flag on untouched territory, seems to be pushing through in Karnataka. After KR Pet in 2019, it was Sira on Tuesday. Whether it was the convention of bypolls favouring incumbent governments or the BJP's tactical social re-engineering efforts, coupled with disgruntlement towards Congress and JDS, for the second time in less than a year, the saffron party won a seat that it has never tasted electoral victory in.

With an electoral novice as its candidate, the BJP snatched the JDS-Congress fortress of Sira, a Vokkaliga-dominant seat, in the bypolls, voting for which was held on November 3.

As anticipated, BJP candidate Muniratna emerged victorious in Rajarajeshwari Nagar assembly constituency, but the highlight was the massive margin of 58,113 votes. In Sira, Dr C M Rajesh Gowda of the BJP beat former minister and Congress candidate T B Jayachandra by 13,414 votes.

The BJP, which has barely ever secured more than 20,000 votes in Sira, secured 42 per cent vote share, creating history. "This is a pro-people, pro-farmer government that fulfils its promises. The victory in both the seats is an indication that people are with us. I intend to expand the cabinet in a day or two," declared a victorious Chief Minister B S Yediyurappa.

With his spectacular win, Muniratna is now one step closer to being inducted into the Yediyurappa cabinet in keeping with the promise made to him while shifting to the BJP from the Congress.

Despite fielding its old warhorse, the Congress was decimated in Sira in DK Shivakumar's first election as KPCC president. P4

MI-DAS TOUCH

Mumbai Indians clinched their fifth IPL crown in Dubai on Tuesday by beating Delhi Capitals in the final by five wickets. They are the second team after Chennai Super Kings to defend the title | SPOTZPICS

EXPRESS READ

HC seeks Amazon response to Future Retail plea

Bengaluru: The Delhi High Court Tuesday sought Amazon's response on a plea by Future Retail, alleging that the e-commerce major was interfering in its ₹24,713 crore deal with Reliance Retail on the basis of an interim order by a Singapore arbitrator. P13

2 Al-Badr terrorists killed by Forces in J-K's Shopian

Srinagar: Two Al-Badr terrorists were killed in an encounter with security forces in Shopian district of Jammu and Kashmir on Tuesday. The slain terrorists were identified as Irfan Ahmad Thoker from Kutpora, and Umer Ahmad Lone from Naidgam Lone Mohallah.